

## LADDER FROZEN AGAINST THE SHED

The word is "February",  
A few dry leaves, the trees  
parodying themselves  
with gestures of winter  
now that it's almost over—  
black leafless branches  
curling at the edges  
of cloud, if not in response  
to the dog left out, hoarse  
from its stopless barking,  
then to a brown, isolate leaf  
clicking against itself  
the wind's sound.

The word is "February",  
when relationships drift  
toward atonement.  
Pragmatic blizzard,  
obscuring the mutable—  
cold wet grass—  
hint of spring,  
goadng the rueful  
whirr from in here  
of the forced air heat:  
golfball on the windowsill,  
white emblem of  
chance equals hope,  
whole globe plucked from its  
—one of its—courses.